

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Claims 1-16 and 18-71 remain in the application. Claims 15, 22, and 27 have been amended. Claim 17 has been cancelled. Claims 1-14 and 29-71 have been allowed.

In item 2 on page 2 of the above-mentioned Office action, claims 15-16 have been rejected as being anticipated by Sugiyama et al. (US Pat. No. 5,406,888) under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

In item 3 on pages 2-3 of the above-mentioned Office action, claim 15 has been rejected as being anticipated by Kumaki et al. (Japanese Patent Application Publication No. 5-77412) under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

In item 5 on page 3 of the above-mentioned Office action, claims 18-19 and 23-24 have been rejected as being unpatentable over Sugiyama et al. and further in view of Rudewitz et al. (US Pat. No. 6,142,072) under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

In item 6 on page 4 of the above-mentioned Office action, claims 18, 20-21, 23, and 25-26 have been rejected as being unpatentable over Sugiyama et al. in view of Haramia et al. (US Pat. No. 3,611,923) under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

In item 7 on pages 4-5 of the above-mentioned Office action, claim 28 has been rejected as being unpatentable over Sugiyama et al. and further in view of Beisel et al. (US Pat. No. 5,479,858) under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

The rejections have been noted and claim 15 has been amended in an effort to even more clearly define the invention of the instant application.

More specifically, the feature of claim 17 has been added to claim 15. Since claim 17 contains allowable subject matter as indicated in item 9 on page 5 of the Office action, claim 15 is now believed to be allowable. Since claims 16, 18-21, 23-26, and 28 are ultimately dependent on claim 15, they are believed to be patentable as well.

Applicants acknowledge the Examiner's statement in item 8 on page 5 of the above-mentioned Office action that claims 1-14 and 29-71 are allowed.

Applicants also acknowledge the Examiner's statement in item 9 on page 5 of the above-mentioned Office action that claims 17, 22, and 27 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The feature of claim 17 has been added to claim 15. Claims 22 and 27 have been written in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In view of the foregoing, an early issuance of a Notice of Allowance to claims 1-16 and 18-71 is solicited.

In the event the Examiner should still find any of the claims to be unpatentable, counsel would appreciate a telephone call so that, if possible, patentable language can be worked out.

The fee in the amount of \$400.00 for two extra independent claims in excess of three is enclosed herewith.

Petition for extension is herewith made. The extension fee for response within a period of one month pursuant to Section 1.136(a) in the amount of \$120.00 in accordance with Section 1.17 has already been paid with the amendment dated December 30, 2004.

Applic. No.: 09/902,550
Amdt. Dated January 13, 2005
Reply to Office action of September 14, 2004

Please charge any fees which might be due with respect to 37
CFR Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to the Deposit Account of Lerner
and Greenberg, P.A., No. 12-1099.

Respectfully submitted,

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For Applicants

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